The breakfast discussion, which lasted two hours, evoked a restatement of the Jellicoe objections against convoys with which we were already familiar. The First Lord promised, however, to summon a representative delegation of captains in the mercantile marine in order to ascertain their views as to the practicability of the convoy system. He also undertook to abide by the result of two experiments in escorting which had recently been initiated. The first one was between Britain and the Norwegian ports and the other between British and French ports.

Two convoy experiments

But it took time to establish the efficacy of these experiments. Meanwhile, the Admiralty were confirmed in their views from the fact that the Norwegian experiment in its initial form was not a success.

The fact that the experiment was not a systematic convoy, was imperfectly organised and was therefore not given a fair chance, was not taken into account. It was not a success and the Admirals "had told us so/"

On the other hand, the French convoy trial was proceeding satisfactorily. The coal shipments from England to France had been very severely attacked during the latter part of 1916

French coal convoy

French asked us to arrange for their escort. It was a great piece of luck for Britain that the task of organising the control was entrusted to a very intelligent young officer who had

not been afflicted with hardening of the professional arteries. The Allied cause owes much to Commander (now Admiral) Henderson. With the aid of a small force of armed trawlers he carried out a scheme of daily convoys along three routes, making for **Brest**, Cherbourg, and Havre. The first experiments